



GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

Public Hearing January 28, 2013

**Testimony in SUPPORT of Raised S.B. Bill No. 431, AAC The secretary of The Sate,
Proclamations Of A Civil Preparedness Emergency And Notice Of Legislative Session.**

Raised Senate Bill No. 431

An Act Concerning The Secretary of the State, Proclamations Of A Civil Preparedness Emergency And Notice of Legislative Session

Senator Musto, Representative Jutila and Members of the GAE Committee

My name is Sue W. Larsen. I am Chair of the ROVAC Legislative Committee and I am here to speak in SUPPORT of Raised SB 431.

The October 29th storm of 2011 was tough for many towns in the northern section of CT. Farmington attempted to get the November election postponed through the courts but failed. The basis of the decision was that a polling place was available for the election with backup lighting and power. However, the voters were still without power and without the ability to get to a polling place due to downed power lines and fallen trees. Voter turnout was poor at best for many of the towns hit by the storm in spite of the fact that power was coming back. Voters were busy trying to get out of their homes, still struggling with damaged roofs, roads still closed and other storm related issues.

The October 29th storm of 2012 hit the coastline of Ct hard. Many towns used alternate polling places and did a tremendous job working to get the polling places operational and to make the voters aware of the locations. The issue again was the voter being able to vote.

The bottom line is that the Secretary of the State is the best official to determine the status of any emergency for an election. The Secretary of the State will need to work with the Registrars of Voters in order to decide how best to approach the disaster.

The voters should always be the first consideration. A polling location may be open but if the voters cannot get to the polling location, the election is not fair, efficient or democratic. The circumstances within the entire town must be considered in a decision to proceed with an election and with communication between the Secretary of the State's office and the Registrars of Voters, this could be accomplished.

Sue W. Larsen, Registrar Of Voters, South Windsor

Chair, ROVAC Legislative Committee